

# DAILY CITIZEN

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360

Thursday, April 23, 2026

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## CIVICS LESSON



TERRI PEDERSON, DAILY CITIZEN

Dodgegeland High School junior Hailey Ockerlander, right, shares her opinion during a discussion while learning about the Dodge County Board. Students from Dodgegeland, Horicon and Hustisford participated in the Dodge County Government Day on Friday.

### Government Day gives area students chance for hands-on engagement in community affairs

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The vote itself was inconsequential. Civic engagement was the point. Juniors from three Dodge County school districts on Friday met for the annual government day, and as part of the experience, the students debated the possibility of a year-round school while sitting in the seats of the Dodge County Board of Supervisors. Horicon High School junior Caleb Spittel has mixed feelings about a year-round school year and, in particular, he thinks

younger grades benefit from the time away from school, he added. "High school should be year-round for the moving up in life and college should also be year-round," Spittel said. Madyson Rindevie, from Horicon High School, wondered how that would affect families in which parents depend on their high school students to watch their younger brothers and sisters. Dodgegeland High School junior Hailey Ockerlander thought, however, that the time outside of school benefits all grades,

prevents students from burning out and allows students to spend time with tutors to go over concepts they did not understand the previous school year. The discussion was a hands-on exercise that's part of a Dodge County tradition that almost faded out during the pandemic. The Government Day tradition of having students learn in person about the role local government plays in people's lives began in 1958.

Please see CIVICS, Page A3

### Earth Day cleanup options available in Beaver Dam

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Earth Day will be celebrated on Saturday in Beaver Dam with opportunities not only to clean up downtown, but also at one of the city's parks. Those wanting to help out on Saturday at the Patrick Parker Conley Skate Park, 203 Fletcher Road, can meet at the park at 9:30 a.m. and clean up the property, including the storm damage that occurred, as well as trying to remove some of the graffiti.

Beaver Dam's traditional downtown cleanup will start at 9 a.m. Saturday in the parking lot behind Farmers and Merchants Union Bank on Front Street. The event's theme this year will be "Celebrating Beavers, Our Ecological Partners," co-organizer Marilyn Thomas said. "All are welcome to grab a bag, globes, directions, grabbers and spend an hour and a half picking up trash downtown," Thomas said. "The more volunteers, the better." Those who come alone will be paired with others and may make a new friend along the

way, Thomas said, adding that about 60 people attend the event every year. The filled trash bags will be returned to the shelter behind the bank at 10:30 a.m., and those helping will be given thank-you gifts, Thomas said. The gifts will include a coupon for a cookie at Great Harvest, 128 Front St., a 10% off coupon to Beth and Daisys, 126 Front St., along with gifts from Beaver Dam Community Library and Thomas' book, "Beaver Dam's Best Dam Fix." Thomas wrote the book for this year's celebration. The book is about a beaver

who unintentionally told a lie, which escalates into him becoming homeless, she said. "The themes include the importance of facing our fears, adapting to change, and how reaching out to another can save the day," Thomas said about the book, which is illustrated by Colleen Burtard. Thomas will be at Rosalee's Book Boutique, 234 S. Spring St., from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. to autograph the book.

Please see EARTH DAY, Page A3

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CLASSIFIEDS C3 OBITUARIES None  
COMMUNITY A2 OPINION A6-7  
LEGALS C7 SPORTS C1



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